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The Man that Died for Me.

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"The Man That Died for Me."

MRS. J. K. BARNEY.

MANY years ago I wanted to go as a foreign missionary, but my way seemed hedged about, and after a few years I went to live on the Pacific coast. Life was rough in the mining country where I lived, and this was my chance for missionary work.

I heard of a man over the hills who was dying of consumption. "He is so vile," they said, "no one can stand it to stay with him, so the boys place some food by him and leave him for twenty-four hours. They'll find him dead some time, and the quicker the better. Never had a soul, I guess."

The pity of it all haunted me as I went about my work, and I tried for three days to get some one to go and see him and find out if he was in need of better care. As I turned from the last man, vexed at his indifference, the thought came to me, "Why don't you go yourself? Here's missionary work, if you want it."

I'll not tell how I weighed the probable usefulness of my going, or how I shrank from one so vile as he. It wasn't the kind of work I wanted.

At last one day I went over the hills to the little adobe cabin. It was just one

room. The door stood open, and up in one corner on some straw and some blankets I found the dying man. Sin had left awful marks on his face, and if I had not heard that he could not move, I should have retreated hastily.

As my shadow fell over the floor he looked up and greeted me with a dreadful oath.

"Don't speak so, my friend," I said.

"I ain't your friend," he said. "I never had any friends, and I don't want any now."

I reached out, at arm's length, the fruit I had brought him, and stepping back to the doorway I asked him, hoping to find a tender place in his heart, if he remembered his mother, but he cursed her. I asked him if he ever had a wife, and he cursed her. I spoke of God, and he cursed Him. I tried to speak of Jesus and his death for us, but he stopped me with his oaths, and said, "That's all a lie. Nobody ever died for others."

The next day I went again, and every day for two weeks, but he did not show the gratitude a dog would have shown.

At the end of that time I said, "I'm not going any more." That night, when I was putting my little boys to bed, I did not pray for the miner, as I had been accustomed to do. My little Charlie noticed it and said, "Mamma, you did not pray for the bad man."

"No," I answered with a sigh.

"Have you given him up, mamma?"

"Yes, I guess so."

"Has God given him up, mamma? Ought you to give him up, mamma, before God does?"

That night I could not sleep. The man dying, and so vile, with no one to care!

I got up and went away by myself to pray, but as my knees touched the floor I was overpowered by the sense of how defective had been my prayers. I had had no faith, and I had not fully cared, beyond a half-hearted sentiment. Oh, the shame, the sham of my missionary zeal! I fell on my face literally, as I cried, "Oh, Christ, give me a little glimpse of the worth of a human soul."

Did you ever ask that and mean it? Do not do it unless you are willing to give up ease and selfish pleasure, for life will be a different thing to you after that revelation.

I stayed on my knees until Calvary became a reality to me. I cannot describe those hours. They came and went unheeded, but I learned that night what I had never known before, what it is to travail for a human soul. I saw my Lord that night as I had never seen him before.

The next morning brought a lesson in Christian work I had never learned before. I had waited on other days until the afternoon, when, my work being all over, I could change my dress, put on my gloves, and take a walk while the shadows were on the hillsides. That day, the moment my little boys went off to school I left my work, and hurried over the hills, not to see "that vile wretch," but to win a soul. There

was a human soul in the balance and I wanted to get there quickly.

As I passed on, a neighbor came out of her cabin and said, "I'll go over the hills with you, I guess."

I did not want her, but it was another lesson for me. God could plan better than I could. She had her little girl with her, and as we reached the cabin she said, "I'll wait out here; and you hurry, won't you?"

I do not know what I expected, but the man greeted me with an awful oath. It did not hurt me as it did before, for I was behind Christ, and I stayed there. I could bear what struck Him first.

While I was changing the basin of water and towel for him, things which I had done every day, and which he had used but never thanked me for, the clear laugh of the little girl rang out upon the air like a bird's note.

"What's that?" said the man eagerly.

"It's a little girl outside who is waiting for me."

"Would you mind letting her in?" he said in a different tone from any I had heard before.

Stepping to the door I beckoned to her, and then taking her by the hand said, "Come in and see the sick man, Mamie."

She shrank back as she saw his face and said, "I'm 'fraid." But I assured her with, "Poor sick man! he can't get up, and he wants to see you."

She stood near him, with her face framed in golden curls, her eyes tender and piti-

ful, and in her hand the flowers she had picked from the purple sage brush. Bending towards him she said, "I sorry for 'ou, sick man. Will 'ou have a posy?"

He laid his great bony hand beyond the flowers on the plump hand of the child, and tears came to his eyes, as he said, "I had a little girl once and she died. Her name was Mamie. She cared for me. Nobody else did. Guess I'd been different if she'd lived. I've hated everybody since she died.

I knew then I had the key to the man's heart, and the thought came quickly, born of that midnight prayer service, "When I spoke of your mother and your wife you cursed them, and I know now that they were not good women or you could not have done it."

"Good women! Oh, you don't know nothin' 'bout that kind of women. You can't think what they was."

"Well, if your little girl had lived and grown up with them, wouldn't she have been just like them? You would not have liked to have her live for that, would you?"

He had not thought of this, and his great eyes looked off for a full minute. As they came back to mine he cried, "Oh, no! no! I'd killed her first, I'm glad she died."

Reaching out and taking the poor hand I said, "The dear Lord didn't want her to be like them. He loved her better than you did. So he took her away where she could be cared for by the angels. He is

keeping her for you. To-day she is waiting for you. Don't you want to see her again?"

"Oh, I'd be willing to be burned alive a thousand times over if I could just see my little gal once more, my little Mamie."

Oh, friends, you know what a blessed story I had to tell that hour, and I had been so close to Calvary that night that I could tell it in earnest!

The poor face grew ashy pale, as I talked, and the man threw up his arms as though his agony was mastering him. Two or three times he gasped as though losing breath. Then clutching me he said, "What's that, woman, you said t' other day 'bout talkin' to somebody out o' sight?"

"It's praying. I tell Him what I want."

"Pray now! pray quick! Tell him I want my little gal again. Tell him anything you want to."

I took the hands of the child and placed them on the trembling hand of the man. Then dropping on my knees, with the child in front of me, I bade her pray for the man who had lost his little Mamie and wanted to see her again. As nearly as I remember, this was Mamie's prayer:

"Dear Jesus, this man is sick. He lost his 'ittle girl and he feels bad about it. I's so sorry for him, and he's sorry too. Won't you help him, and show him where to find his 'ittle girl? Do, please. Amen."

Heaven seemed to open before us. There stood One with the prints of the nails in his hands and the wounds in his side.

Mamie slipped away soon, but the man kept saying, "Tell him more about it, tell him everything—but oh! you don't know."

Then he poured out such a torrent of confession that I could not have borne it but for the One that was close to us that hour, reaching out after that lost soul.

It was the third day when the poor, tired soul turned from everything to Him, the Mighty to save, "The Man that died for me."

He lived on for weeks, as if God would show how real was the change. I had been telling him one day about a meeting, and he said, "I'd like to go to meetin' once; I never went to one of them things."

So we planned a meeting, and the boys came from the mills and the mines and filled the room.

"Now, boys," said he, "get down on your knees while she tells about that Man that died for me."

I had been brought up to believe that a woman shouldn't speak in meeting, but I found myself talking, and I tried to tell the simple story of the cross.

After a while he said, "Oh, boys, you don't half believe it, or you'd cry; you couldn't help it. Boys, raise me up. I'd like to tell it once."

So they raised him up, and between his short breathing and coughing he told the story, and this, as well as I can recall, is a part of what he said:

"Boys," he said, "you know how the water runs down the sluice-boxes and car-

ries off all the dirt and leaves the gold behind. Well! the blood of that Man she tells about went right over me just like that; it carried off 'bout everything. But it left enough for me to see Mamie, and to see the Man that died for me. Oh, boys, can't you love him?"

Some days after I saw that the end was near, and as I left him I said, "What shall I say to-night, Jack?"

"Just 'Good-night,'" he said, "and when we meet again I'll say 'Good-mornin' up there."

The next morning the door was closed, and I found two of the boys sitting silently by a board stretched across two stools. They turned back the sheet from the dead, and I looked on the face, which seemed to have come back nearer to the "image of God."

"I wish you could have seen him when he went," they said. "He brightened up, 'bout midnight, an' smiling, said, 'I'm going, boys. Tell her I am going to see Mamie. Tell her I'm going to see the Man that died for me,' and he was gone."

Kneeling there, with my hands over those poor cold ones that had been stained with human blood, I asked to come to understand more and more the worth of a human soul and to be drawn into deeper sympathy with Christ's yearning compassion: "Not willing that any should perish."

What Shall I Do to Be Saved?

REPENT—Acts 2:38.

And what is repentance? Repentance is the decision to turn from the old life to the new one in Christ Jesus; to break with sin and turn to God. Just where you are you can do this. DO IT NOW.

BELIEVE—Acts 16:31.

Believe what? Believe that God has laid all your sins upon Jesus. Hear His word: "All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on HIM (JESUS) the iniquity of us ALL." Isaiah 53:6. God says He has laid all your sins on Jesus. Believe this, simply because God says so.

RECEIVE—John 1:12.

Why, then, am I not saved? you say. Simply because you have never yet RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST as your sin-bearer and substitute. God says again in His word: "As many as received Him (Christ) to them gave He power to become the sons of God." Just where you are you may lift up your heart to Him and say, "Lord Jesus, I do now accept you as my Saviour and sin-bearer, and from this time I will trust you to save me." Do this DO IT NOW, and Christ will save you just as He has promised.

CONFESS—Romans 10:9.

Tell your wife; tell your husband; tell your neighbors; tell your friends, that you have accepted Christ as your Saviour, and are trusting Him to save you. As you thus Repent, Believe, Accept, and Confess Him you will come to know day by day, with growing fullness, the joy and blessing of His salvation in your heart and daily life.